

Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) Technical Assistance Part II Q&A November 2003

The following information reflects questions submitted in early November from schools and area education agencies, as well as additional clarifications. Each month the CSIP technical assistance package will include questions and answers. This month's content includes the following categories:

- Constant Conversation Question #1: What do data tell us about our student learning needs?
- CSIP Linkage: Teacher Quality District Career Development Plan
- LEA Procedural Issues
- AEA Procedural/Technical Assistance Issues

Constant Conversation Question #1: What do data tell us about our student learning needs?

1. How does a school or school district decide what data to collect in order to make the best decisions for student benefit?

Answer: Two general categories of data exist: a) state and federal mandated and b) locally determined. State and federal mandated data include data reported in the Annual Progress Report (APR) pursuant to Chapter 12, AYP data pursuant to NCLB, and annual data reports for federal programs. Locally determined data include information required to answer questions schools might have about any outcome, process, or procedure (e.g., demographic data, climate surveys, instructional time allocations, student work, student grades, student discipline, student participation in school food programs, suspensions, and expulsions).

2. Can a school or school district use only the trend line data in its APR as the “information acquired over time”?

Answer: Yes, this would meet minimal legal expectation but not best practice. The data in the APR would meet minimum requirements for data collection and analysis for the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). These data include the following:

- Multi-year trend line in reading and mathematics at grades 4, 8, and 11 (including disaggregated subgroup data);
- Multi-year trend line data in science at grades 8 and 11 (including disaggregated subgroup data);
- Multiple measure data in reading, mathematics, and science;
- Drop outs, high school seniors intending to pursue post-secondary education, high school students who achieve 20 or higher on the ACT, high school graduates completing a core program; and
- Locally determined indicators.

3. Should a school or school district use more than only the trend line data in its APR as the “information acquired over time”?

Answer: Yes, schools are encouraged to collect data that informs decision making about the whole child, which minimum state and federal compliance expectations do not.

4. What are the advantages of using multiple methods of collecting community input to inform decision making?

Answer: How a school or school district seeks input from the community is a local decision. However, it is advisable to use multiple methods for soliciting community input to ensure that the information collected accurately depicts needs and the public will.

As a school gathers community information, it should be mindful about the following:

- Are all community populations (e.g., students, parents, business, churches, non-parental households, and agricultural community) represented in the data?

- Did a significant number of community persons respond—enough to justify use of the data in decision making?
- Did the school collect information in ways that did not create bias in responses?

5. Does state or federal law require The Iowa Youth Survey?

Answer: No. In Iowa, most school districts use the Iowa Youth Survey; however, districts may use surveys other than the Iowa Youth Survey as long as they yield valid, reliable, objective data. (See page 2 in the CSIP Rule/Statute Interpretation Matrix Regulatory Guidance.)

6. What data must a school district collect if it determines it needs to apply for Title IV Part A (Safe and Drug-Free Schools) funds?

Answer: The district must collect two types of student data: a) incidence and prevalence of substance abuse and b) violence. (See page 2 in the CSIP Rule/Statute Interpretation Matrix Regulatory Guidance.) A district must also collect two types of community data: a) risk factors and b) protective factors related to substance abuse and violence. (See page 3 in the CSIP Rule/Statute Interpretation Matrix Regulatory Guidance.)

7. Is it possible for whole-grade-sharing districts to have identical answers to CSIP Question #1: What do data tell us about our student learning needs?

Answer: No. Each whole-grade-sharing district's CSIP will reflect data around the learning of the students that it serves, who are different students for each district. However, a whole-grade-sharing "sending" district would certainly be interested in the achievement of its students received by another district—those data might be part of the sending district's needs assessment.

**District Career Development Plan Embedded in the CSIP
Public School Districts Only**

8. How does the Iowa Professional Model relate to the CSIP?

Answer: The Iowa Professional Development Model is guidance to support the required district career development plan, which is embedded in the CSIP.

9. Does state law require use of the Iowa Professional Development Model?

Answer: No, however the district career development plan is required pursuant to Iowa Code 284.6 and 281—IAC 83.6 (Teacher Quality rules scheduled for adoption February 2004). The Iowa Professional Development Model provides a recommended framework for developing a district career development plan; however, a school district may use another model as long as it has all the required elements of the district career development plan.

10. How does the district career development plan fit in with the CSIP?

Answer: The district career development plan is embedded within the CSIP. The requirements of the district career development plan align with the four CSIP Constant Conversation Questions. Implementing the district career development plan is the primary method to build teacher capacity to support meeting district academic goals.

11. Does all professional development have to be "scientifically" researched based?

Answer: No. Within the district career development plan (which is embedded in the CSIP), professional development practices/strategies that have a documented scientific research base must be identified, at a minimum, somewhere within the K-12 system. However, districts are expected to work toward implementing research-based practices at all levels.

12. How is a district supposed to document "scientifically" based research in its CSIP?

Answer: The Department will provide this guidance in December for CSIP Constant Conversation Question #2: What do/will we do to meet student learning needs?

In the mean time, consider using the process that appears in the Content Area Networks web site: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tqt/tc/prodev/main.html>

13. Does every professional development offering have to be part of the district career development plan?

Answer: No. The district career development plan specifically targets professional development that builds teacher capacity designed to improve student achievement in reading, mathematics, and/or science.

Please note this distinction: The district offers other kinds of training that do not meet the components and the purpose of the district career development plan. This “other” training will not appear in the district career development plan. Examples appear below:

- Training on topics other than curriculum/instruction (e.g., how to facilitate meetings or how to score writing samples)
- Mandated training (e.g., blood borne pathogens and asbestos)

14. Does the content of the district career development plan have to include all K-12 staff?

Answer: No, a district must include all K-12 staff responsible for instruction.

15. Are all K-12 teachers expected to fully participate in the same professional development activities in the same way?

Answer: No. All professional development that is related to the district career development plan must be anchored to district goals, but situations may exist when building data indicate a variation in content. For example, the district might have a reading goal for the whole district. At the secondary level, teachers may work on analysis and generalization, and the elementary level may work on inferences and interpretation. These decisions are based upon data.

16. Does the professional development that is related to the district career development plan apply to all high school staff responsible for instruction?

Answer: Yes. Instructional strategies are applied across content areas.

17. Are teachers responsible for “special areas” (e.g., physical education, art, and music) required to participate in professional development that is related to the district career development plan?

Answer: In most cases, teachers in specialized areas can implement the instructional strategies in the district career development plan into their content. It is possible, however, that a specialized teacher may be involved in professional development orientations but not involved in every aspect of the full training in the district career development plan. In those cases, the specialized teacher will focus on other goals in his/her individualized teacher career development plan. Whether a specialized teacher can implement instructional strategies (related to the district career development plan) into his/her content is locally determined.

18. Can the focus of the district career development plan be only within a specific grade span or at a specific grade level?

Answer: No, but the district can have content variations across grade spans. For example, a district could have different content at the elementary, middle, and high school as a result of data-based, documented needs. A district may not limit its district career development plan to grades K-6, for example.

19. Do the required components of the district career development plan apply to all instructional staff K-12? *These are the components: Based on student data and other needs assessment; aligned with district student achievement goals, focused on instruction, curriculum, and assessment; research-based practices aligned with Iowa Teaching Standards; and theory, demonstration, practice, observation, collaboration, and evaluation (formative and summative).*

Answer: Yes. However, a district plan could provide a schedule that has each building or grade span planning and implementing the components of the model at different rates. For example, in year one, the elementary building may have completed the data collection, goal setting, and design phases and be heavily involved in providing training and engaging in collaborative work. The high school, however, is studying data and working on selecting content. These differentiated schedules would be indicated in the CSIP.

20. Does the district career development plan have to address reading, mathematics, and science all in a given year?

Answer: No. The district needs to prioritize based upon data. The district is not required to have a district career development focus for each goal area. The district may support other actions for a goal (e.g., curriculum and assessment development, scheduling, and textbook adoption) other than the professional

development in the district career development plan. The district may decide to adopt new goal areas over time but should not have more than one or two focus areas in professional development.

21. To what extent must a teacher's individual professional development plan align with the District Career Development Plan?

Answer: At a minimum, the goals for an individual teacher career development plan must be based upon the relevant Iowa Teaching Standards that support the long-range goals identified in the district's CSIP and any building-level goals for improved student achievement. Since the district career development plan is focused on district long-range goals to improve student learning, ideally the goal for individual teacher career development plans and the goal for the district career development plan will be closely aligned. The process described in the Iowa Model for Professional Development may be used simultaneously to implement both.

The individual teacher career development plans of faculty members in a building (or multiple buildings) would look similar because of collaborative work being undertaken to study the same instructional content, but might also reflect individual teacher needs. For example, a fourth grade teacher whose school is engaging in the study and implementation of a new math curriculum would likely have an individual plan to study and learn the new math curriculum. Should he/she be identified during the evaluation process as in need of additional skills in classroom management, however, that teacher's individual teacher career development plan would include staff development to address this specific need in addition to the learning of the new math curriculum.

22. Does the individual career development plan of a 4th grade art teacher, for example, have to contain an individual goal aligned with the "study and implementation of a new math curriculum?"

Note: See question and answer #17.

Answer: Yes, unless the school has determined that the art teacher cannot implement any of the instructional content (either general instructional strategies or mathematics content specific strategies) in the art classroom.

23. Will whole-grade-sharing districts have identical district career development plans in their CSIPs?

Answer: No. The CSIP will contain a district career development plan that is aligned with each district's goals and building needs. Each whole-grade-sharing district will study, implement, and monitor instructional strategies particular to its content and general instructional needs. It is possible, however, that whole-grade-sharing districts might share professional development providers, training, etc., that they might have in common.

**CSIP Procedural Issues: Program Application for Funding
Public School Districts Only**

24. For what state and federal programs does the CSIP function as the partial program application?

Answer:

Federal Programs:

- Title I Part A (Parental Involvement)
- Title II Part A (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting)
- Title II Part D (Enhancing Education Through Technology)
- Title III (Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students)
- Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities)
- E-Rate
- Perkins (Vocational Education)

State Programs:

- Iowa Class Size and Early Intervention Program
- Iowa Mentoring and Induction Program
- Programs for Returning Dropouts and Dropout Prevention (At-Risk Allowable Growth)

25. How will a school district indicate to the Department which of the state and federal funding streams listed in #22 it wishes to access for the 2004-05 school year?

Answer: The new five-year CSIP will be submitted through a new web-based program in the fall of 2004—for implementation beginning with the 2004-05 school year. Within that web-based program, each district will select the funding streams for which its CSIP is the partial program application.

26. What else does a district have to do to apply for the funding from these state and federal programs for implementation in the 2004-2005 school year?

Answer: Each district will complete budget worksheets next fall for each funding stream for which it needs to make application. The budget worksheets will contain any additional program application requirements that are not appropriate for the CSIP.

27. In its CSIP, how will a district apply for funds that it intends to use flexibly through the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)?

Answer: Directions for applying to REAP funds for the 2004-05 school year will be included in technical assistance provided with the web-based submission.

28. What about Perkins funding for the 2004-05 school year? Is this an addendum to the CSIP? What about the consortium?

Answer: Perkins is consolidated into the CSIP for the first time. (See Topics 22, 42, and 43 of the CSIP Rule/Statute Interpretation Matrix.) Additional Perkins program requirements will be met with information that is submitted with budgets and made available during comprehensive site visits. If the district has applied through a consortium, the information submitted must align with the application developed and submitted by the consortium.

29. Does federal money follow students involved in a whole grade sharing agreement?

Answer: The following Federal funds do not follow the student per se. It would depend on what is negotiated in the 28e agreement between the districts and what has been approved in the application as allowable under the Federal program. The district awarded the grant is responsible for how the grant funds are expended and may have sub-recipient monitoring requirements if any of the funds are paid to another district.

- Title 1
- Title 1, Part C Education of Migratory Children
- Title 1, Part D, Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who are -Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
- Title II Part A Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
- Title II Part D Enhancing Education through Technology
- Title III Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrants Students
- Title IV Part A Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities
- Title V Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs

Iowa Code 257.38 Programs for Returning Dropouts and Dropout Prevention--all districts are responsible for dropouts and dropout prevention.

CSIP Procedural Issues: Requirements

30. What specific areas does the CSIP require?

Answer: The CSIP Rule/Statute Interpretation Matrix identifies compliance with the state and federal “requirements” of the CSIP. The CSIP contains 43 topics or areas.

31. Not all 281—IAC Chapter 12 and federal program requirements are included in the CSIP rule-statute interpretation matrix. Which ones were not included?

Answer: State and federal requirements not monitored through the CSIP web-based program will be monitored for compliance through one of the following venues: a) budgets, b) comprehensive site visits, c) assurances, and d) additional requirements submitted through the web-based program. State and federal

requirements monitored in venues other than the CSIP will be distributed to schools and school districts in March. The focus now is answering the four Constant Conversation Questions.

32. Are schools and school districts required to answer each sub-question for each of the 43 required CSIP topics?

Answer: No. The sub-questions do not apply to all CSIP topics and are designed only to guide planners' thinking. It has yet to be determined if the sub-questions will appear in the CSIP web-based program.

33. Is a school district that whole-grade shares required to complete a Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP)?

Answer: Yes. The district must complete a plan and set goals for the grades and students that the district directly serves.

34. What are the CSIP requirements for school districts that whole-grade share?

Answer: Each district in a whole-grade sharing agreement must meet all requirements of the CSIP applicable to the grade levels it houses. It is possible that whole-grade-sharing districts may use the same data, share curriculum, have the same long-range goals, etc. However, the CSIP of each whole-grade-sharing district should reflect data, goals, actions, student assessment, and program evaluation for the grade levels it houses.

CSIP Procedural Issues: Other

35. How will CSIPs be read? How, when, and by whom will they be monitored?

Answer: Teams (yet to be determined) will read each CSIP. The reading process will have three functions: a) providing feedback to schools about alignment and content quality, b) providing feedback to schools about legal compliance, and c) collecting data for state decision making. It is expected that School Improvement Consultants and other Department staff will monitor CSIP implementation and corrective actions, if necessary.

36. What will the Department do with any qualitative data from all the sub-questions for the Constant Conversations questions gathered through the CSIP web-based system?

Answer: The Department has yet to determine the content and scope of qualitative data gathered through CSIPs. The public web-based system will provide access to any person or persons who wish to gather qualitative data.

37. Listed below are several questions regarding the electronic web-based submission of the CSIP:

Note: The CSIP web-based system is under development. Many of the questions below will have more specific answers over time. No more details are available than those shared during the October ICN session.

- **Will schools be entering data into the on-line CSIP similar to the way they do BEDS and AYP data?**

Answer: It is expected that schools will use a password much like BEDS and AYP. However, a major difference in data entry for CSIP is that the information will be in narrative form.

- **How will data entered be saved?**

Answer: It is expected that schools will "certify" information as with other systems.

- **Will there be a way to cut-and-paste CSIP information into the system?**

Answer: It is hoped that the system will contain such a function.

- **Will the on-line information be easily printable so a school doesn't have to retype its CSIP?**

Answer: That is the intent. However, at this time, the printed document will not be "pretty" (e.g., page breaks may exist at awkward places).

- **Can there be another row of squares on-line that show the compliance issues?**

Answer: It is the intent that before a school can "certify" a CSIP Constant Conversation Question it receives a reminder to ensure that all requirements under those questions have been met.

38. Is there a paper version of the CSIP questions/layout being posted on the web site so schools can work through it prior to April?

Answer: Yes, the Constant Conversation Questions and sub-questions were distributed before the October 29 ICN session and are available on the Department's web site at this address: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/documents.html>. The CSIP Thinking Process for Westlake Community School District (Question #1: What do data tell us about our student learning needs?) was also disseminated before the October 29 ICN session. The Department will distribute the teaching document for Westlake question by question over the coming months.

It is the intent that schools will have a teaching document (called Westlake) that will contain aligned content for the four Constant Conversation Questions, research-based practices, holistic program evaluation, and appropriate detail to meet all CSIP legal expectations.

39. Will the CSIP technical assistance videotapes distributed each month contain demonstrations of staff collaboration?

Answer: No. However, districts are encouraged to use the videotapes and accompanying Power Point and documents with stakeholder groups as appropriate and pause the tapes to give opportunities for stakeholders to engage in dialogue around answering each of the four Constant Conversation Questions. Consider contacting your area education agency for video resources already available.

40. When will the Chapter 12 Rule Interpretation Matrix- Regulatory Guidance be available?

Answer: The Chapter 12 Rule Interpretation Matrix is currently available on the Department's web site: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/sv.html>.

A Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) Rule/Statute Interpretation Matrix is also available to assist in developing the CSIP: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/documents.html>

**CSIP Procedural Issues: General
Area Education Agencies**

41. Can future ICN sessions for AEA consultants be delivered at multiple sites within an AEA?

Answer: Due to budgetary restrictions, all remaining CSIP technical assistance will currently occur through videotapes, a CSIP contact e-mail distribution list, and web site postings.

42. Can the AEAs be given a list of LEA CSIP contacts so they can be sure to forward the videos to the correct person?

Answer: No, the Department did not collect and enter the e-mail addresses in such a way that would allow sorting by AEA. In cases when the name of a contact person was not submitted, the Department identified superintendents of school districts and principals of accredited nonpublic schools. More than 700 addresses are included in the CSIP contact person distribution list. AEAs are encouraged to work with local schools and school districts to accurately identify contact persons and create a database for materials distribution.

43. How are other schools working through the process of CSIP development? Are schools using teacher teams, administrative teams, the School Improvement Advisory Committee, and/or summer work?

Answer: The Department is aware of schools and districts that are using a variety of strategies and work teams to develop the CSIP. Best practice would involve developing a process that includes collaboration with all stakeholder groups, but the process that a district designs is locally determined.